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Revising the American Dream

THEOLOGY and literature in this country since the First World War are alike in their rediscovery of the depths of evil. This is part of what is meant by the theme, "America's coming of age." Emphasis on these insights inevitably calls forth the charge of defeatism. For the buoyancy of our people and the axioms of the American dream resist the shocking disclosures, and Christian hope itself finds it difficult to digest the new evidences of enigmatic evil. So far as literature is concerned the bearers of our idealistic tradition had first to cope with the older movement of realism, but this was only a precursor. The knowledge of man set forth in the poetry, novel and drama of the last quarter century has created much more of a dilemma. Here the champions of our traditional optimism, the defenders as they claim of sanity and health in our arts and letters, can only scold, as witness most of the popular literary reviews. The affirmation and the hopeful strain in our culture has its great justification, but its sponsors must be hospitable to new experience and must recast their message if they expect to criticize effectively the negation, the tragic sense of life and the apocalyptic theme in the modern arts.

In a notable book-length narrative poem, of which the first half only has been published¹, entitled *Brother to Dragons: A Tale in Verse and Voices*, Robert Penn Warren offers us a picture of a disabused Thomas Jefferson as a perfect paradigm of the issue in question. The story deals with episodes involving the sister and son-in-law of Jefferson, episodes which disclose the evil in the heart of man to the great statesman and lead him in retrospect to question the hopes which sprang to such a flame at the Continental Congress in 1776. For he comes to see the labyrinthine dark in which man is lost and to recognize

the beast, the Minotaur, which waits and hides behind the dark:

The beast waits. He is the infamy of Crete.
He is the midnight enormity. He is
Our brother, darling brother. (p. 6.)

In the earlier time he had set his hope upon the "fundamental and intrinsic innocence" of man. He had never been a fool, indeed. He had known his history, "the abattoir of Time." He had travelled in France and had seen the "visage of unwordable evil," the "shade of Gothic night" on the portals and coigns of the cathedrals. Meriwether Lewis had written him from the west of the lust in the communal ceremonies of the Indian lodges. But Jefferson had interpreted all this as

The nightmare of sick children who meant
no harm. (p. 30.)

The Maison Carrée of Nîmes had spoken to him of law and proportion and harmony, and of

a fair time yet to come, and soon,
If we might take man's hand, strike shackle,
lead him forth

From his own monstrous nightmare, then
his natural innocence

Would dance like sunlight over the delighted
landscape. (p. 32.)

So it was that in an hour of elation he wrote the Declaration of Independence. At Philadelphia, he says,

We knew we were only men
Caught in our errors and interests. But I a
man,

Suddenly saw in every face, face after face,
The bleared, the puffed, the lean, the lank, all,
On all saw the brightness blaze, and knew
my own days,

Times, hopes, books, horsemanship, the
praise of peers,

Delight, desire, even love, but straw

¹ *The Kenyan Review*, XV, 1 (Winter 1953), 1-103. Copyright, Robert Penn Warren. The complete book will be published by Random House in August, 1953.

Fit for the flame, and in that fierce combustion I—

Why, I was dead, was nothing, nothing but joy.

And my heart cried out, "Oh, this is Man!"
And this my minotaur. . .

But no beast then; the towering
Definition, angelic, arrogant, abstract,
Greaved in glory, thewed with light, the
bright

Brow tall as dawn. I could not see the eyes.
(p. 7.)

So Jefferson tells of how he seized the pen and wrote the Declaration. He had seen his minotaur, Man, but he had been "blind with the light," and had failed to note that its eyes were blind. The tale so far as it is here told amply dramatizes the sightless horror in question and the meaninglessness today of stale formulas of optimism and morality.

Do you think the Dark Inquisitor can be deflected

By trivialities like that? (p. 90.)

The interesting thing is that it is the disenchanted Jefferson who is the most absolute in his negation. Are not the rationalists and romantics often the best candidates for despair? In the dialogue of the poem the author as "R.P.W.," who as a man of our century has never held the earlier hopes of Jefferson, is the one to hold out for an attempt to understand the roots of the evil, for responsibility, and thus for hope. The poem like much of the most significant literature of our time opens the way through a mature grasp of evil to a less vulnerable trust in man and in republican institutions.

A. N. W.

Editorial Notes

The Soviet empire is obviously in serious straits, though anticipation of its disintegration is probably premature. The cracks which appear at the edges of the empire, hitherto characterized by monolithic unity, the fissures in east Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland, are significantly related to the cracks at the very center of the empire. A desperate struggle for power is obviously going on in the Kremlin. It is not even certain that Stalin's ostensible successor is still alive. He is certainly not holding Stalin's power.

All these signs and omens might be happy evidences of the dawn of a brighter future. But unfortunately our alliance of free nations is disintegrating almost as rapidly as the Soviet empire. The rebellion of President Rhee is one indication. The disintegration of the European defence community is another. The most serious evidence of decay is the catastrophic loss of our moral prestige in the whole free world. Anti-Americanism has reached endemic proportions in both Europe and Asia. The influence of Senator McCarthy on American politics is directly related to this loss of prestige. We may regard him among us as a nuisance and a danger. But we know sufficiently about the essential health of our institutions to regard him as something less than a mortal danger. But in Europe and Asia we have long been pictured as a "Reactionary" and "Fascist" nation. Every manifestation of "McCarthyism" is therefore a proof to the European and Asian nations of the truth of their prejudices about us. Thus the essential unity and similarity of temper between us and the other free nations is obscured. McCarthyism seems to substantiate Europe's worst fears about the quality of our life.

* * *

The disintegration of two power blocks, locked in fateful conflict, obviously opens all kinds of possibilities, though the possibilities would be brighter if it were only one of the blocks, that of the Soviets, which were in process of disintegration. One could wish that there was more ability and inclination to put our wild men in their place. We must not only face the future with soberness but give our allies the sense of our soberness. In battle the captain must not only be free of hysteria but also give his company the sense of his calmness. Otherwise the loss of morale is tremendous.

* * *

As we can expect no official opposition to McCarthyism, unofficial opposition becomes the more important. The Assembly of American Rabbis and the Presbyterian General Assembly have given valuable leads. A vigorous stand by the National Council of Churches would be in order.

R. N.

Author in This Issue

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Communism Threatens the Churches of Eastern Europe

HERBERT HEWITT STROUP

COMMUNISM is like Christianity in at least one respect. It seeks for the whole life of the devoted follower. It is not content to have any aspect of the life of the individual or group exist outside its sway. Communism is a totalitarianism of the material order; Christianity is a "totalitarianism" of the spiritual order.

In eastern Europe communism and Christianity come face to face with sharpness of methodology and concreteness of purpose. It is in this area of the world that we can see most clearly what are the specific relations of the two great powers.

Superficially at times it would seem that Russia has no absolute desire to crush the churches within its satellites. The recognition by the Soviet leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church, for example, seemingly looks in that direction. But, one needs to look more closely. The theory and practice of communism belies this notion. Let us survey both the theory and the practice of communist relations with the eastern European churches.

On March 18-23, 1919, the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union met to establish the formal communist program for Russia. The program drawn up at that time is still in force. It affects a wide number of aspects of the living of the Russians, but on the score of religion and the communist attitude toward it, the program states as follows:

The aim of the Party is finally to destroy the ties between the exploiting classes and the organization of religious propaganda, at the same time helping the toiling masses actually to liberate their minds from religious superstitions and organizing on a wide scale scientific-educational and anti-religious propaganda.

This official statement by the Party has never been repudiated; rather it has been implemented in brutal and precise ways even to this day in areas where the Soviet leaders are directly or indirectly in control.

The theory of the Party is further supplemented by Joseph Stalin himself. For example, in speaking to an American Labor delegation in 1927, Mr. Stalin was able to say:

The Party cannot be neutral towards religion and it does conduct anti-religious propaganda against all and every religious prejudice . . . it will continue to carry on propaganda against

religious prejudices because that is the best way of undermining the reactionary clergy who support the exploiting classes and who preach submission to these classes.

This statement also has never been declared in discord with official Russian policy.

But, Stalin got his power presumably from Lenin. What did Lenin have to say about this important subject—religion under communism? Here are Lenin's views briefly:

Marxism as materialism is absolutely atheistic and resolutely hostile to all religion. We must combat religion; that is the rudiment of all materialism and consequently of Marxism. . . . The fight must be linked with the concrete practical work of the class movement.

These words are found in Lenin's *Select Works* (vol. XI, p. 666), published in 1908.

The widely noted commentary of Karl Marx on opiate religion speaks of his own attitude on the subject. This is how Marx put it in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*:

It is not religion that creates man, but man who creates religion . . . religion is the groan of the downtrodden creature . . . it is the opium of the people.

So it is that the theory of communism points clearly to its incompatibility with Christianity or any other all-embracing philosophy of life. Americans being still largely political innocents and having achieved for themselves a positive degree of emotional and social maturity which is striking are prone to believe that no one or group can believe what the communists say they believe. This is an argument from the goodness and innocence of Americans rather than from the character of the Russian leaders and people. As hard as it is for us to believe that the Russians mean what they say about the relations of communism and religion, we must try very hard to take them at their word and their practice.

Why then is there any ambiguity in their actions. Why did they recognize the Russian Orthodox Church, for example? Of course, there is some degree of ambiguity in every situation requiring decision. Ambiguity cannot be avoided politically at any point for man never makes pure choices between clear alternatives. The situation to the Russian leaders is ambiguous also. They obviously cannot be men and know their own

minds completely and perfectly. This means that they too must fail in the pure and simple realization of any of their objectives. History has an element within it (which the Hebrew prophets liked to think suggested God) which both thwarts and fulfills the purposes of men.

But, further, the Soviet masters seek to be expert at consciously developing ambiguity on the part of others. In various spheres of social and political leadership the Russians have employed this technique. In regard to peace and war, for example, their actions have been tragically clear now for years. They seek aggressively to engulf territorially surrounding countries to be used possibly as buffers in case of war. This policy has meant an ever increasing conquest, for if one set of buffer states is needed then another is needed to protect the first, and so on. On the other hand, no country has been so noticeably vociferous for peace. It has so much desired peace, through the organization of petitions, meetings, slogans, propaganda thrusts, etc., that many have honestly come to doubt that the communist leaders are doing more than developing those ambiguities in human situations which at this time best suit their purposes of expansionism or imperialism. This seemingly contradictory methodology is apparent in many other spheres of Russian life.

Another possible reason for the apparently ambivalent attitude of the Russian leaders toward the churches is the fact that they are very busy with many problems on many fronts. They clearly have a problem in developing their designs in Asia. The eastern European countries themselves are a vast problem of control and exploitation, for the Russians are "realistic" enough to recognize that each country requires its own prescription of regulation. The relations between East and West also are surely not bovinely quiescent. So, the policy of the communists toward the churches in eastern Europe is based upon a complex number of factors into which we need not go fully at the present time. One general pattern, however, seems to emerge: wherever a country is strong both politically and in terms of its church power, the communists seek some *modus vivendi* with it for the time being, while developing the other parts of their program in these countries. Where, on the other hand, countries are weak politically and religiously, the communists employ sterner methods of direct attack. Thus far it is not possible to declare their efforts in either type of national situation to have failed.

While Protestants are vitally concerned with the attacks of communists and their agencies upon Protestant churches, they should realize

that by far the greater group which is now under attack is that of the Roman Catholics of eastern Europe. While the percentages vary from country to country, the number of Roman Catholics in eastern Europe comprise at least half of the total populations. There are about 70.5 millions in eastern Europe. In the smaller countries the Roman Catholics comprise a smaller proportion of the populations. For example, there are only about 50,000 Roman Catholics out of 7 million in Bulgaria. In Albania there are about 100,000 out of 1.2 million. Of the 16 million inhabitants in Rumania only about 2.6 million, including the Uniates, are Roman Catholics.

But, in Poland the story is quite different. At least 95 percent of the Poles (25 million) are Roman Catholics. There are over 12 million people living in Czechoslovakia. About 8 million are Roman Catholics. In Hungary about 70 percent of the population of 9.1 million is Roman Catholic.

So much for the situation of friction in Eastern Europe and the theory of communism toward the churches. But, what of the practice of communism in connection with the churches and especially the Roman Catholic Church? What sociological developments and techniques are being employed on the part of the communist conspiracy?

The following types of social action are not meant to be exhaustive nor can everything be said at this time about all of the examples or verifying data. Certainly, however, the major lines of recent development may reliably be constructed.

1. ESTABLISHING STATE CHURCHES

In several countries, where the possibility seemed promising, the communists have established state churches which owe primary obligation to the party in power. In the creation of such "national Catholic Churches" there is obviously an appeal to patriotic sympathies as well as to parochial ambition. This technique has been especially apparent in Albania, Hungary and Rumania, although it is also felt to some degree in Poland and Czechoslovakia. On June 26, 1951, for example, a little band of pro-communist Catholic priests got together to hold what they called a General Assembly. The Assembly decided to form a National Catholic Church. According to the Assembly this National Church "has a national character . . . has no organizational, economic, or political ties with the Pope." It also asserted the need to "develop among the faithful a sentiment of loyalty toward the 'people's power.'" "Relations with foreign churches may be established only through official channels of the Albanian People's Republic."

In Hungary, moreover, the nationalization of

the churches came about in 1951. In May of that year the government announced a new law which established a State Bureau of Religious Affairs. This agency effectively controls the various religious groups within the country. All schools are nationalized, teachers are strictly supervised, and "appropriate" textbooks, lauding the communist program, are in use.

In Poland and Czechoslovakia there have been attempts to nationalize the churches and especially the Roman Catholic Church, although the movement has been less speedy, perhaps because of considerable Catholics in the population and because of the notable resistance on the part of their leaders. In Czechoslovakia a State Office for Church Affairs has all but emasculated the traditional churches in that country. Archbishop Beran, who protested sharply was placed under house arrest for two years and then expelled from Prague, fined a large sum, and his office declared vacant. The house arrest of Bishop Kowalski of Poland for his disciplining of two priests who had taken part in the public support of the communist dominated Caritas comprises only an example of what has happened in Poland and elsewhere.

The reorganization of Caritas in Poland reminds us of another phase of communist method. Caritas, until January 23, 1952, was the principal relief granting agency of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland. Because of its prominence, it was a natural object of attack. In 1952, the organization was accused of mismanagement and corruption and promptly reorganized as an agency for relief which is directed closely by communist powerholders. So, in other countries, in education, social service, the training of the clergy, the press, etc., the state has become the final arbiter and the actual day-by-day controller of social and religious life. In Czechoslovakia the "Catholic Action" group, composed of communist inspired priests fulfills this role. In Rumania there is a similar "Catholic Action" group.

2. SEVERING RELATIONS WITH THE CENTERS OF WORLD CHURCH AUTHORITY

The character of the National Catholic Church of Albania, previously mentioned, is a case in point. In every eastern European country there has been a deliberate effort to cut off the Roman Catholic Church from its Vatican relationship. It began in Poland in September, 1945, when the Polish leaders denounced a Concordat with the Vatican which had been in existence since 1925. The trial of Cardinal Mindszenty in Hungary is well known to all. Only those who are willing to take a loyalty oath can sit on the Hungarian Bench of Bishops; as a consequence the Bench

has been sadly understaffed. All higher ecclesiastical appointments in Hungary are now "subject to governmental consent." In 1948, in Rumania the government repudiated the Rumanian-Vatican Concordat of 1929 which regulated affairs between the two powers. Later Bishop O'Hara, formerly of Georgia, U. S., was implicated in a staged trial and dismissed from the country.

The difficulties of Protestant leaders in making and maintaining contact with the World Council of Churches is familiar to newspaper readers. In eastern Europe the World Council has been repeatedly denounced as an agency of "western imperialism" and delegates to it have been prevented from attending meetings west of the "iron curtain." During the summer of 1952, the appearance of Josef Hromadka of Czechoslovakia, a leader of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren, at the World Conference on Faith and Order at Lund, Sweden, was especially viewed as being a concession to the strength of independency and protest in the eastern churches. His statement before the Conference, while it showed signs that all is not well in the life of Protestantism in Czechoslovakia, also indicated a degree of accommodation which has alarmed some western church leaders. His identification of the prophetic ministry as saying a basic "Yes," rather than "No," comprises not only an interesting interpretation of prophetic religion, but an indication of how far the accommodation has gone in his mind.

3. INCREASING THE FINANCIAL DEPENDENCY OF THE CHURCHES

Americans find it hard to believe that in times past the churches of Europe and England have been basically dependent for their financial support upon governments. In the period prior to the close of the Second World War, however, the financial relations between the European churches and their governments were rather stable and mutually accepted. In the recent years the traditional patterns have been changing. Apparently professing the well known adage that he who controls the purse strings controls the organization, the communists have sought recently to make the churches very dependent financially upon them.

One of the chief means of increasing this financial dependency is by taking away the lands of the churches from which they previously received income. In Hungary, for example, this method is evident. Before the Land Reform Act of 1945, the Roman Catholic Church owned about 1,500,000 acres of land. Upon the passage of the Act, the Church's property was seized with the exception of about 150,000 acres. The Bench of Bish-

ops in Hungary in 1951 made a "voluntary offer" to give the state all land benefices left to parishes.

In Poland those priests who have declared their loyalty to the regime and have preached sermons advocating that the laity be devoted to their national leaders have won economic preferment. They are usually singled out as the "patriotic clergy" with the inference intended that those who do not cooperate are not patriotic. The "patriotic" are granted positions in the hierarchy of clergydom as they become available through the lack of cooperation of some of the clergy. They also receive generous pensions for their support.

In these and other ways the clergy in eastern Europe are becoming ever more dependent upon the communist groups in power. At this point it does not seem possible that a solution of church dependency can be found aside from the traditional pattern. The assertion by the churches of their financial independency of the state is most difficult to conceive. The American experience provides no simple clue to what might work in eastern Europe.

4. CREATING TROUBLESOME REGULATIONS

The communist leaders in eastern Europe have been adept in placing practical barriers in the way of the fulfillment of churchly functions. They are somewhat like a tyrannical parent who says that his child may do a certain thing, but hedge the doing of it with so many impossible conditions that the child does not take the action because he does not wish to meet the oppressive conditions. For example, the Czechoslovakian government freely allows bishops and archbishops of the Roman Catholic Church to communicate with the Vatican. It only requires that every communication be channeled through a governmental office where it becomes also available to the government. Thus, in effect, there is a close system of censorship.

In Poland, church records have been taken from the local parishes. So, when a clergyman wishes to perform a rite he must check with the municipal records. Usually there is a high fee for the use of the records. In many cases the rite is not performed because of the poverty of the clergyman and the participants. Such record keeping is also done in Czechoslovakia.

These troublesome regulations are multiplied many times over in the specific organization of church and community life in eastern Europe. Probably the theoretical resistance of communism to the churches is a notable deterrent to the effective functioning of the churches. But, possibly the practical, mundane, persistent and regulatory kinds of resistance are equally effective.

5. USING THE CHURCHES FOR PROPAGANDA ENDS

Communist leaders in eastern Europe have constantly used Christian leaders who were willing in their propaganda efforts. Take Hungary as an example. There one finds the Hungarian Peace Committee of Roman Catholic Priests. The very title tells the story. This Committee not only is an agent of the Hungarian communist leadership in conducting so-called peace campaigns. It also has tried to reorganize the lower priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church so that it would be more responsive to communist direction. In some ways the Committee has supplanted the Bench of Bishops.

In Czechoslovakia the "Christian Action" group also acts as a communist organization in the area of religious affairs. It seeks to convert priests to communism. It reports publicly on such conversions. It places its approval upon the various "lines" of communist domestic and foreign policy. It supported the so-called Stockholm Peace Appeal and condemned the fictitious use of bacteriological warfare in Korea by the United Nations' forces. In regard to the latter, the Prague radio on March 27 broadcast: "the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Catholic Action of Czechoslovakia has appealed to Christians throughout the world, especially in Italy, France, and the United States, to condemn the American Imperialists' use of bacteriological warfare in Korea and China."

The use of Christians by the communists reminds us forcefully of the dangers inherent in any social order which too easily identifies Christianity with a particular existence. In our own country there are those who wish to see a social order preserved through the ministries of Christianity. America cannot be simply critical of eastern European Christians for their perversion of the Christian faith if they in this country persist in a similar theological heresy.

One also must feel deeply for those in eastern Europe who are anxious to maintain their faith in the midst of current detested pressures. For them American Christians should have the utmost sympathy. In the crisis which exists between church and state in eastern Europe there is the possibility that truly great faith will be born within the church, even as it was during the fourth century. Our situation in America, despite the stresses and strains of a disjointed economy, is relatively calm. The words of Josef Hromádka speak eloquently for the eastern European Christians today: "We are realizing what it means (theologically speaking) to walk between life and death."

The World Church: News and Notes

Second WCC Assembly Called Part Of New Reformation in the Church

Lake Geneva, Wisconsin (EPS, N. Y.)—Speaking to the Association of Council Secretaries on June 24 at their meeting at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, Robert S. Bilheimer, Secretary for Program and Conference Administration of the World Council of Churches, spoke on the Second Assembly of the W.C.C. (scheduled for Evanston, Ill., August 15-31, 1954) calling it "the most vivid organized expression of the ecumenical reformation." Mr. Bilheimer, who is Executive Secretary of the Second Assembly, likened it to other great reform movements of the Christian Church.

"... The Wesleyan reformation held up the power of the new transformed life in Christ. We are in the early stages of another of the great reformations of the Church. This is one which takes men back to the Biblical principles of the Church—its unity and its world mission. This is the ecumenical reformation. It is expressed in many places and nations. The most comprehensive single expression of it is the World Council of Churches."

To the Assembly will come 600 voting delegates representing 161 member churches from 46 different countries, 150 distinguished consultants and theologians, about 75 fraternal delegates, 120 youth consultants, and 600 accredited visitors.

Mr. Bilheimer pointed out that the theme of the Assembly is "Christ—the Hope of the World" and that this theme promises to be the focus of one of the most interesting and fruitful discussions in modern ecumenical history. In whatever way the subject is finally developed by the Assembly, the crux of it is the affirmation that the future "is not an endless, trackless waste nor the narrow province of ambitious men nor the result of some unidentifiable but inexorably felt evolutionary urge, but rather that the future is in the hands of God and that its pattern may be seen in the mind of Christ."

The six sub-themes of the Assembly are: Faith and Order—Our Oneness in Christ and Our Disunity as Churches; Evangelism—The Church's Neglected Vocation; Social Questions—The Responsible Society in a World Perspective; International Affairs—Christians in the Struggle for World Community; Intergroup Relations—The Church Amid Racial and Ethnic Tensions; The Laity—The Christian in His Vocation.

In discussing the Assembly's program, Mr. Bilheimer paid particular attention to the plans for visitors. Northwestern University facilities, he pointed out, make it possible to seat some 1600 of the general public during the daytime plenary meetings. At the evening public meetings, an even greater number will be accommodated. During the first ten days of the Assembly, there is to be a public meeting or other event every evening. At those times when the Assembly is meeting in sub-committees, special programs for the public will be presented in Cahn Auditorium. Among special events are a great public worship service in Soldier Field on the opening Sunday;

a concert by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and a loan exhibition of Christian art selected by the Chicago Art Institute.

Membership of Swiss Protestant Churches In the World Council Defended

Switzerland (EPS)—Dr. Alphons Koechlin, of Basle, speaking at a meeting of representatives of the Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches, stoutly defended the wisdom of the Federation's membership in the World Council of Churches. Dr. Koechlin, who was chairman of the meeting, which took place in Glarus June 8 and 9, said:

"Fear has recently been expressed by Mr. Feldman, of the Federal Council, that by joining the World Council of Churches our Swiss Protestant Churches might be loosening the bond linking them to the State. Our experience before the war and during the war itself proves this fear groundless: at that time our Churches, thanks in part to their connection with the ecumenical movement, were the sure guardian of independence and of both an inward and outward resistance. Nor is the fear justified today. I will only mention in passing the fact that our active participation in the World Council's work is in full accord with the principle of this country's active neutrality, and in harmony with the unanimous will of the people. If, in so far as it is in the general interest of the Church and made possibly by outward circumstances, the World Council maintains contact with the Churches in the East, it is only carrying out the commandment laid upon the Church by her Lord. At the same time it is serving the cause of peace, which our Government is likewise fostering by every means in its power.

"We have, again in keeping with the policy of the World Council, deliberately held aloof from all political peace movements. We have also clearly expressed our hatred of those political ideologies of violence which deny freedom and are irreconcilable with the Gospel. It is of the nature of the Church that she recognizes Christ, and Christ alone, with complete submission, as her Lord, and proclaims His Gospel and His glad tidings only, to her people, bearing witness to the State, regardless of whether from its point of view her words be appropriate or inappropriate: 'For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ.'"

Indonesia Church Council Issues Unity Appeal

Jakarta, Indonesia (RNS)—The Council of Churches in Indonesia has appealed for stronger unity among the Christian churches of the country.

The call was issued at the end of a 10-day second plenary meeting of the national Protestant group.

All Indonesian Christians were urged by the delegates to take part in Indonesia's first general elections, to be held next year.

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The Council decided to send circulars to all Indonesian churches, stressing the importance of participation in the elections.

In other actions, the Council:

Took a firm stand in behalf of freedom of religion and expressed hope that the constituent assembly to be formed after the elections would defend the integrity of religion and clearly define the limitations on the State's power in this area.

Set up a Youth Committee to strengthen ties between Indonesian Christian youth and Christians abroad.

Elected a new Daily Committee, whose members include Johannes Leimena, outgoing health minister in Premier Wilopo's caretaker government.

Mr. Leimena is a leader in the Indonesian Christian Party and has served in most Indonesian cabinets.

Bible in Korean Tongue Being Widely Distributed

Korea (EPS)—In 1952 the Korean Bible Society, of which the Rev. Young Bin Im is Secretary, distributed over 11,000 copies of the Scriptures through the Army

Chaplains of the South Korean Army. Some 31,000 more copies were circulated among ordinary prisoners by the sixteen chaplains serving in the prisons, and 150,000 copies of a Pocket New Testament were given to the American Army Chaplains for North Korean prisoners of war.

According to Mr. Im, the Koreans are the first Asiatic people to have Christian chaplains attached to their armies and the first to have them for their prison service. Before 1945, under Japanese rule, prison chaplains were Buddhists.

Correspondence

Dear Sir:

I was very interested in Bishop Parsons' reflections on the Coronation, but I suggest that his concluding sentence is misleading, where he says, "It was the British Commonwealth of Nations which consecrated the Queen for her task, not the Church of England that little fragment of it which actually officiated at the ceremony." To be exact we should say that the Queen is consecrated by God through the agency of the Church on behalf of the British Commonwealth. This sacramental nature of the service was very clear to a great many of those who heard and saw it; and is not in accord with the suggestion that the Coronation is primarily an affair in which the Commonwealth is the chief mover, with the rather small Church of England just happening to provide the "officiating clergy."

On the contrary the Archbishop of Canterbury introduces the Queen to her people, anoints her and places the Crown on her head, for the very good reason that the Church of England is older than the Monarchy. There were Archbishops of Canterbury for more than two hundred years before there was a King of England; it is right therefore that the Church which did so much to bring the nation to birth should continue to take the initiative in seeking God's blessing upon its present ruler. This continuity means more than picturesque survivals, for the Church is more concerned with continuity of faith than of institutions; and indeed the faith of the Prayer Book which the Queen promises to defend is not basically inconsistent with the faith defended by Henry VIII, for it goes back to the faith of our much earlier fathers.

Incidentally, there was recognition of the other Church bodies in Britain in the part played by the moderator of the Church of Scotland, and by the representatives of the leading "Free Churches" who took part in the processions entering the Abbey. In a sense the service was the act of the whole Church. Constitutionally a British sovereign reigns whether he or she has been crowned or not. But it has become increasingly felt that the spiritual emphasis in the Coronation service is most significant, and that it brings the whole people in touch with the power of God to transfigure the whole of the nation's and Commonwealth's life.

Yours sincerely,

The Rev. Gilbert Baker,
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